

(a) whether Government had decided to give infrastructure status to Hydrocarbon exploration and Production sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the status will enable India's upstream oil companies to get easier access to finance and better loan term for projects and also eligible to issue tax free bonds; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAXMI): (a) and (b) The Government has so far not granted Infrastructure status to 'Hydrocarbon Exploration and Production'.

(c) and (d) The Sectors which are accorded 'Infrastructure' status by the Government become eligible to benefits like:

(i) Infrastructure lending at easier terms with enhanced limits;

(ii) Access to larger amounts of funds as External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs);

(iii) Access longer tenor funds from insurance companies and pension funds, etc'.

#### **Rise in prices of natural gas**

2001. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry's proposal to raise natural gas prices by 60 per cent is expected to increase the power generation costs of gas-based power plants by Rs. 463.6 billion per annum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposed revision suggested by the Rangarajan Committee would increase the gas price to 6.77 dollar per mmbtu from the current price of 4.2 dollar per mmbtu;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Ministry of power has opined that the base price of domestic gas beyond 5 dollar per mmbtu is unviable for the power sector; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAXMI): (a) and (b) The Government has approved a new gas price formula based on the Rangarajan Committee recommendations, which will be applicable from 1st April 2014, Rangarajan Committee has not given any amount of increase in natural gas prices. It has merely recommended that the gas pricing policy may be based on searching out from global trade transaction of gas the competitive price of gas global level.

The increase in gas prices by one US\$ per MMBTU will increase the electricity cost by Re. 0.45 per unit depending upon dollar exchange rate, as estimated by Ministry of Power.

(c) and (d) The gas prices, based on the new gas price formula, would be notified in advance on a quarterly basis using the data for four quarters, with a lag of one quarter. Thus it is not possible to predict the prices applicable in April, 2014 which will be based on International hub prices and price of the Indian and Japanese imports during the calendar year 2013.

(e) and (f) Yes Sir, the Ministry of Power had opined that the base price of domestic gas beyond 5 dollar per mmbtu is unviable for the power generation.

However, Ministry view is that India will not be able to develop and produce its hydrocarbon reserves in the scenario, where producer's price for natural gas is capped @ \$ 5/mmbtu. It will make exploration and production of natural gas unviable.

#### **Retail price of petrol in the country**

2002. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the price of crude oil in International Market for the last three years and the current year in terms of Indian rupee; and

(b) the details of the retail-selling price of petrol in the country during the said period?